

the United States in recognizing the month of October as Hindu heritage month. The 8th Congressional District is home to many followers of this uniquely pluralistic religion, and I wish to celebrate the Hindu community's valuable contributions to my district and to our state and country. I believe this acknowledgment is especially timely, given the disturbing rise of prejudice and racism in this country, including Hinduphobia as manifested in hateful speech and violent acts perpetrated against Indian-Americans and Hindu houses of worship.

The Hindu religion dates back millennia and has profoundly influenced both ancient and modern cultures. Its message of religious tolerance, non-violence, and the universality of the human experience was introduced to this country in 1893 by Swami Vivekananda in his landmark address at the World Parliament of Religions in Chicago, Illinois. Swami Vivekananda's words of peace and his emphasis on self-perfection and service to others sparked interest in the Hindu faith and contributed to the growth of Hinduism in the United States. His spiritual understanding had a profound influence on one of the greatest leaders of the 20th century, Mahatma Gandhi, who in turn inspired the important work of one of our nation's most revered leaders, Martin Luther King, Jr., to advance the cause of civil rights in the United States.

The Hindu faithful in our country include physicians, lawyers, scientists, economists, philosophers, artists, academics, business leaders, government officials—and Members of Congress. They are guided by Swami Vivekananda's call to service and respect for all religions and all people. Madam Speaker, I know all Americans of goodwill share these beliefs, and today I would like to celebrate the work of the Hindu faithful in building bridges of understanding between all Americans, for their important contributions to our economy and our cultural and civic life, and for the part they play in creating our wonderful and distinctively diverse American experience.

HONORING SOROPTIMIST
INTERNATIONAL CENTENNIAL

HON. JARED HUFFMAN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 30, 2021

Mr. HUFFMAN. Madam Speaker, I rise today with the honorable Congresswoman JACKIE SPEIER, Congresswoman ANNA ESHOO, and Congressman MIKE THOMPSON in celebration of Soroptimist International reaching its centennial on October 1, 2021. A global volunteer movement with over 72,000 members in 121 countries, Soroptimist, later named Soroptimist International, was established to advocate for gender equality and human rights, a mission that it has stayed true to this day.

Founded in 1921 when women were still not permitted to join service organizations, Soroptimist began as an 80-member club in Oakland, California with a vision for a world where women and girls were provided the resources and support to achieve their individual and collective potential. The club's first project was Save the Redwoods, confronting logging companies, lobbying the legislature, and rallying public support to designate a portion of the forest as protected land, which remains today.

Within 5 years, the organization, renamed Soroptimist International, grew to 15 clubs throughout the United States. In 1924, the first Soroptimist club in Europe was founded in Paris and fueled the establishment of clubs throughout the continent. Several federations were established across the globe from Australia to Africa, leading projects to support refugees, secure housing for the impoverished, assist individuals with disabilities, and provide vocational training for women and girls. Uniting these federations, Soroptimist International Association was awarded consultative status in 1950 by the United Nations Economic and Social Counsel, an honor reserved for about 3,000 non-governmental organizations worldwide. UNICEF also granted the organization consultative status for service projects assisting children in 1966.

Today, Soroptimist International includes 5 federations worldwide: Africa, the Americas, Europe, Great Britain and Ireland, and the South West Pacific. Their current priorities towards achieving gender equity include strategically addressing child marriage, female genital mutilation, domestic violence, rights of older women, migration, and human trafficking.

Madam Speaker, Soroptimist International has continued to be an innovative leader in promoting human rights and gender equity worldwide. Through the unwavering dedication of its many members and its continually growing network, the organization has never lost sight of its original purpose to educate, empower, and transform the lives of women and girls across the globe. Therefore, please join me in congratulating Soroptimist International for a century of inspiring work, and in wishing them many more years of success.

HONORING THE CAREER OF JON
PRATT, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
OF THE MINNESOTA COUNCIL OF
NONPROFITS

HON. BETTY McCOLLUM

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 30, 2021

Ms. McCOLLUM. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor the distinguished career of Jon Pratt on the occasion of his retirement as Executive Director of the Minnesota Council of Nonprofits. During his more than three decades of nonprofit advocacy work and leadership, Jon has made an enduring impact for residents of Minnesota and has uplifted the important and necessary work of nonprofit organizations across the country. As founder of Minnesota Council of Nonprofits, one of the largest statewide nonprofit associations in the country, Jon created a space to meet the needs of Minnesotans through the growing nonprofit sector—a space which today serves over 2,200 member organizations across the state.

A lifelong Minnesotan, Jon began his career as a lawyer in 1977, and in the following decade gained valuable experience through several different jobs. He first organized a statewide lobbying program during his time at Minnesota Public Interest Research Group and traveled the Midwest while learning the ins and outs of foundation work as the regional field director for The Youth Project, a founda-

tion providing grants and assistance to grass roots community organizations. And as campaign manager for future U.S. Senator Paul Wellstone's bid for state auditor, he learned how critical it is to engage government to serve all Minnesotans. He then served as executive director of The Philanthropy Project where he led a coalition advocating for an increase in philanthropy efforts that benefited disadvantaged people across the state of Minnesota.

It was these diverse experiences that led Jon to convene a group of local leaders of nonprofit organizations to establish the Minnesota Council of Nonprofits (MCN) in 1987. Only the third such trade association of its kind in the United States, MCN was launched to fill the increasing needs of nonprofits throughout the state, with the core belief that sharing information and working together across areas of common interest will be mutually beneficial and uplift the nonprofit sector as a whole. Today, MCN hosts classes and networking opportunities for both new and established organizations, helps groups secure grants and other funding, facilitates a jobs board to connect employers with those seeking a job in the sector, and advocates for public policy changes at every level of government.

During his time with MCN, Jon was fundamental in helping elevate the status of Minnesota's nonprofit sector by establishing standards of excellence for nonprofits, co-developing Grant Advisor—a rating tool for those seeking grants that provides free and honest feedback about the grant process, creating training programs and materials to strengthen the service work of organizations, and conducting years of research on the nonprofit sector to promote transparency and positive change in the field.

I am grateful to have worked with Jon for many years on key state and federal policy issues as he led the way in advocacy work on behalf of the Minnesota nonprofit community. MCN was the largest employer group to support raising the state's minimum wage, they worked with the Minnesota Legislature to secure a non-itemizer charitable tax deduction, and through MCN's Minnesota Budget Project, led the charge to expand Minnesota's working family tax credit. Jon's advocacy also spreads beyond the immediate needs of the nonprofit world as he has been a constant voice for public good by opposing state voter ID bills and supporting human rights and equitable social programs.

Jon has truly been a champion for nonprofits across the Nation and while his tremendous leadership at Minnesota Council of Nonprofits will be missed by many, his lasting contributions are sure to inspire the leaders and public servants of the future. Madam Speaker, please join me in honoring the exceptional career of Mr. Jon Pratt.

HONORING RICHARD STAHL

HON. GREG STANTON

OF ARIZONA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 30, 2021

Mr. STANTON. Madam Speaker, I rise to honor the life and legacy of Richard Stahl, who passed away on January 3, 2021. A community leader and LGBTQ+ advocate, Richard